

Housing Committee
Public Hearing, March 4, 2010
Re: Senate Bill # 320

Testimony submitted by: Alberta Witherspoon, 358 Orange Street, New Haven, CT
06511

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen of the Housing Committee. My name is Alberta Witherspoon. I live in McQueeney Towers in New Haven, CT. I am a board member of the Public Housing Resident Network. I have been a resident of public housing for 20 years.

I am in favor of Senate Bill # 320 – The selection of Tenant Commissioners because it gives us residents the right and ability to determine who can best represent us. I don't think that decision can nor should be made by a mayor or town selectman.

The purpose of a resident commissioner is to fight for the rights of tenants. Who better to make that decision on who can best fight for and with us than residents?

We currently have a resident commissioner who does not fight for us and who votes in favor of everything our housing authority wants to do. I am not suggesting she is a bad person. It is simply because residents do not have a voice in the current selection process that most resident commissioners don't view themselves as representatives of and for residents. I believe this attitude is indicative of the fact that residents don't have a say in who their commissioner should be,

I strongly urge you to get this legislation passed and send a message to all public housing residents that we are not second class citizens and that our voice is as important as everyone else.

Thank you.